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**A SERMON
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.**

"For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."
Hebrews 4:2.

THE people that came out of Egypt were an interesting company, if we think of what God had done on their behalf and of what he proposed to do for them. They had been lifted up from a state of slavery into one of freedom and they were on their way to a country where they were to be settled, each one upon his own portion of land, therein to become priests and kings unto Jehovah. What an unhappy circumstance that the high ideal set before them was never realized by any of them save two lone men—Joshua and Caleb! You hear them singing at the Red Sea, in exultant joy, and they are on their way to Canaan, the land that flows with milk and honey—loud are their songs and high are their hopes. But mark those lines of graves—those innumerable hillocks which were formed wherever the camp was pitched in the desert! That is the end of the generation which came out of Egypt—“Their carcasses fell in the wilderness.” Instead of reaching Canaan and settling, every man under his own vine and fig tree, they lie in dishonored graves outside of the land of promise. Ah me, so lofty a destiny before them and so sad a missing of it. Let us not follow in their tracks. We are far too much inclined to do so. They were men and we are no better than they by nature.

Oh, for divine grace to walk after a higher rule! Let a holy dread seize upon us at this time, such as that which Paul expresses in the following words—“Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.” Let us not find a tomb when we might gain a throne. Let us not go down into the pit when before us lies the way to heaven and multitudes are beckoning us there. May great grace be given that we may win where a whole nation failed! It will be divine grace, indeed, if Gentiles shall excel the seed of Abraham. May heavenly power create within our bosoms a holy caution, lest by any means we come short of the grace of God! Let rebellious Israel be our beacon; from the graves of their lustings let us hear a voice of warning, lest we also tempt the Lord and constrain Him to shut us out of His rest.

First, I shall invite you to consider Israel’s hearing of the gospel—“Unto us was the gospel preached as well as unto them.” They heard good news from Moses, which was, at any rate, a gospel. But to me it seems that they also heard the gospel which we hear. Secondly, let us notice Israel’s failure to profit thereby—“The word preached did not profit them.” They heard but heard in vain. Thirdly, let us put our finger upon the fatal cause of failure, so plainly indicated here by the words, “not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.” The hearing was alone and without the mixture of *faith*. It answered no practical purpose. May the Spirit of God prepare our hearts for this meditation, and may we so consider the lamentable failure of Israel that we may not fall after the same example of unbelief!

I. First, then, let us think of ISRAEL’S HEARING OF THE GOSPEL. Whether you take it as our translators have put it in the Authorized Version, “Unto us was the gospel preached as well as unto them,” or accept the Revised rendering, “Indeed, we have had good tidings preached unto us, even as also they,” it comes to much the same meaning, for the message of Moses, and the reports of the faithful spies were both typical of the gospel which was brought to us by our Lord and His apostles. Our gospel is clearer than theirs; yet they also had the gospel in all the essential truths of it, and had they fully believed it, it would have been a saving gospel to them.

We shall notice, first, that the good news brought to Israel was a gospel of rest for slaves, a promise of deliverance for men who cried by reason of sore bondage. This was a fit emblem of that news which comes to us in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Listen to the words of Moses in the sixth of Exodus—"Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments. And I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you a God. And you shall know that I am the Lord your God, which brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. And I will give it you for an heritage. I am the Lord." This was exceedingly glad news to the bond slaves in Egypt. These men were made to labor to exhaustion. They had to work in making bricks, and as you well remember, they were denied the straw so necessary to their manufacture. And yet the count of their bricks was not diminished. They had no rest from toil by day or night. And if they did not supply the full number of bricks, they were cruelly beaten by their taskmasters. Truly the tribes of Israel were in a very evil case; they groaned by reason of their bitter bondage, and that promise was a wonderful gospel to them—"I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians."

This is the kind of gospel which is preached to us today. Does not Jesus say, "Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, and you shall find rest unto your souls"? Spiritual rest is even more precious than bodily rest. The great promise of the gospel is rest from the burden of guilt, the pressure of fear, the bondage of habit, the slavery of sin, the scourging of conscience and the dread of wrath to come. Jesus promises rest for the heart, the intellect, the desires, the fears, the hopes, and the conscience of the man. There is perfect rest to be had, rest from all the burdens which the cruel Pharaoh of hell has heaped upon you. It is yours if you will but have it. What a happy people we ought to be to have Christ among us as Himself the rest of our souls! We ought to leap toward this blessing with intensity of spirit and say, "Lord, allow me to enter at once into Your rest! Deliver me from the slavery of sin, and I will serve You all my days with gladness and delight. Lay what burden of holy service You shall please upon me, only ease me of my guilt, and deliver me from the wrath which lies hard upon me." The gospel of rest is preached to you, my hearers, even as it was preached to Israel in Egypt. Have you understood it? Have you received it in your hearts? Have you so mixed faith with the glad news that you have accepted it and made it true in your own proper persons? Can you sing—

*"My heart is resting, O my God,
I will give thanks and sing.
My heart is at the secret source
Of every precious thing"?*

Note next, that the good tidings to Israel was a gospel of redemption in order to their entering into the promised rest. They were slaves to Pharaoh—how could they become dwellers in Canaan? They might truthfully say, "We cannot break our bonds." The power of Egypt would hold Israel as with an iron hand. But with a high hand and an outstretched arm, Jehovah, their God, determined to bring them out; and bring them out He did! Connected with that power of arm there was the price of sacrifice, for they were redeemed typically by the blood of the Passover Lamb. That blood, sprinkled on the lintel and on the two side posts, preserved their houses when the destroying angel passed through the land of Egypt with his death sword. They stood about their family tables and feasted joyfully while there was wailing in every house of Egypt—from Pharaoh's palace down to the lowly chamber of his maid-servant. This day I also preach to you rest through the divine omnipotence of the Holy Spirit and through the sprinkling of the precious blood of the Lamb of God. A full atonement has been made, a sufficient ransom has been presented—by this are men set free.

Christ Jesus is the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world. He died in the believer's place that he might rest lawfully and have no fear of being brought under bondage through the demands of justice. By the death of our Lord Jesus Christ the law has been magnified and the requirements of divine justice have been met. God is, in Christ Jesus, reconciling the world unto Himself. Blessed are the

lips that tell you this good news! I never feel as happy as when I am talking of redemption through the blood of the Lamb. I gladly proclaim perfect redemption, efficacious redemption—I joy to testify that every believer is justly set free and comes righteously from under the curse of God, since “He has made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin. That we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” Beloved, the gospel preached to Israel is the gospel which is preached to us—only we have it more plainly, and see it in substance rather than in shadow. You have heard the word of reconciliation and you know its meaning. Have you rested in it? Have you come to Jesus? Have His wounds become your resting place? Is His blood your covering? Are you sheltered beneath the crimson canopy of His finished sacrifice? That is the point, and in this respect “unto us was the gospel preached as well as unto them.”

Furthermore, it was a gospel of separation. When you read the words of the Lord to His chosen ones, you are compelled to see that He means them to be a people set apart for His own purposes. He no sooner began with them than the first summons was to Pharaoh, “Let My people go, that they may serve Me.” Israel was in Egypt—but Israel was not a part of Egypt. No Israelite could become an Egyptian. As a distinct people they came into the land of Ham, and as a distinct people they went out of the land. Too much was Israel defiled by the customs of that heathen nation—it was not absorbed in Egypt, nor did it cease to be a peculiar race. The Lord has of old separated to Himself, in His eternal purposes, a people who are His, and His they shall still be, even till that day in which He shall make up His jewels. These chosen ones He gave to His Son, and Jesus claims the gift when He speaks of, “as many as You have given Me.” These belong to the Lord Jesus in a special way; these have a destiny before them, even in this world, of separation from the rest of mankind, for Jesus says, “they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” “Lo, the people shall dwell alone and shall not be reckoned among the nations.” “You are a peculiar people.” We are the Lord’s portion, the lot of His inheritance. It is by means of this separation that we find rest. There is no rest for us in Egypt, for it is polluted. Our rest lies where God has prepared it and He cries, “Arise you, and depart. For this is not your rest.” Here we have no abiding city. Here we are “strangers and foreigners, as all our fathers were.” So even here the church is distinct from the world and cannot be made one with it. The eternal choice has made a difference. And by a heavenly calling and a divine life working in us, we are set apart unto the Lord Himself.

The eternal decree of separation is fulfilled in an actual separation in the thoughts and habits and ways and lives of the chosen. We are not now what we were, nor what others are, for John says, “You are of God, little children, and the whole world lies in the wicked one.” This is the gospel of separation which leads on to rest. Until separated there is no rest for us. Thus is it written, “Come you out from among them and be you separate. And I will be a Father unto you and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.” Thus you see that ours is a gospel of rest, a gospel of sacrifice and a gospel of separation from the rest of mankind. Hear it with more earnest heed than Israel gave to it—“For unto us is the gospel preached, as well as unto them.” Dear hearers, do you know what this separation means? Have you been called out? Have you quit your former haunts and ways? Do you cleave unto the Lord with purpose of heart though others turn aside? Do you follow the footsteps of the Crucified? Judge yourselves, that you be not judged.

Still further, the gospel preached to the Israelites told them of a glorious heritage which was provided for them. It was described as, “a land that flows with milk and honey”—a land of wheat and barley and figs and olive oil, a land which was not irrigated by labor but was watered by the rain of heaven. A land of rivers, a land which the Lord thought upon, a land out of whose heart they might dig brass and iron. It was the fairest of all countries, an epitome of the whole world. And it was to be theirs as a freehold forever! Each tribe was to have its portion, each family its lot. This was good news to them, and all the more so because within the outward and temporal good news there was a *spiritual* gospel. Even so are you told that there is a heritage, even a heavenly one, to which God brings His believing people and of which He gives them an earnest even now, in the possession of His Holy Spirit. This heritage is, in a measure, ours even in this life. But into the fullness of its delight we shall enter when the Lord shall come and receive us unto Himself. Beloved, our hearts ought to burn within us

when we think of the good things of the covenant, the fat things full of marrow and the wines on the lees well-refined.

On these Sabbath days, especially, we should look to enjoy a foretaste of that heavenly feast to which there will be no end. We enter into the rest already in a measure—we shall come into the fullness of it very soon. The snows upon the heads of many of you prophesy that the year of your wilderness life is drawing to a close and the endless years of your glory life are hastening on. O my hearers, you have all heard this gospel of glory—have you all accepted it? Are you anticipating the world to come, whereof this gospel speaks? Have you already entered into the life eternal? Is there within you a well of water springing up unto everlasting life? If so, you are thrice happy. But whether or not, to you has this gospel been preached, even as unto Israel of old. They had also preached to them the gospel of a divine calling. For they were informed that they were not to enter into this land to be idlers in it, but they were to be a nation of priests. In that holy land they were to be a holy people. There would they present sacrifices to God, while others worshipped Baal and Ashtaroth. There would the sacred oracle speak to them, while the rest of the world followed lying vanities. There would the glory of the Lord shine out of the midst of His temple and Israel would rejoice in the light thereof. They were to preserve the lamp of truth until the day should come when it would shine on all mankind. Truly, the Israelites who came out of Egypt had a splendid heritage before them if they could but have believed God, and so have grasped it. To them it would have been true—“strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers. But you shall be named the priests of the Lord: men shall call you the ministers of our God.” Happy people!

This, even this, is the gospel that is preached unto *you!* We are called to believe in Jesus, and then, in Him, to become priests and kings unto our God, and in His holy service to spend our happy days. God grant that we may receive this gospel indeed and of a truth! Count not yourselves unworthy of this high honor. Put it not from you, lest the Lord should swear in His wrath, “They shall not enter into My rest.”

Once more—they had a gospel which promised them help to obtain all this. It is a poor gospel which sets heaven before us but does not help us to enter it. To these Israelites, journeying mercies and conquering aids were promised. The Lord said to them, “I will send My fear before you and will destroy all the people to whom you shall come and I will make all your enemies turn their backs unto you. And I will send hornets before you, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before you.” The like help for the attainment of heavenly blessedness is provided in the gospel which we preach. All helps for the winning of the fadeless crown are waiting for them that believe. “The Spirit helps our infirmities.” The Lord “will subdue our iniquities.” “God shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.” “Thanks be unto God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” When we are weak then are we strong; we can do all things through Christ that strengthens us. This gospel is preached to *us*.

The Lord, all-sufficient, will be the help of His people. He says, “My grace is sufficient for you.” Therefore I may gladly sing, “The Lord is my strength and my song, He also has become my salvation.” We are encouraged to go forward and take possession of the promises, for the Lord has said, “Certainly I will be with you.” My dear hearer, do you embrace this gospel? Do you find in it strength for the journey of life? See to it that you miss not the blessing.

Enough of this! You will find it an interesting exercise to observe in how many ways the gospel preached to Israel runs parallel with the gospel preached to us. The true gospel is no new gospel—it is that old wine which is better than the new with all its fermentation and froth—it is the gospel of the Eternal God, which changes not.

II. But now, secondly, I have the painful business of setting briefly before you ISRAEL’S FAILURE TO PROFIT BY THE GOSPEL WHICH THEY HEARD. Though they heard it from many, they clung to Egypt. One would think they would have abhorred the land of the iron furnace and the brick kiln; but no! At the beginning they said, “Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians.” The signs and wonders that God worked in the field of Zoan were almost as much needed to separate Israel from Egypt as to loosen the cruel grasp of Pharaoh. The nation had not long been quit of the land before they cried out to

Moses, "Why have you dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? It had been better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness." Again and again they sighed for the leeks and the garlic, and the onions of Egypt, whining for the coarse food of their bondage, and despising the bread from heaven. They talked as if the Lord had done them a great injury by setting them free from their taskmasters. Ah me, the gospel which they heard did not profit them, for in their hearts they still tarried in the house of bondage. Worse still, they provoked the Lord. By their murmurings, but chiefly by their idolatry, they vexed His Holy Spirit. Could you have believed it? After all the gods of Egypt had been smitten in detail by the plagues of Jehovah, yet the people remembered the idol god, the ox of Egypt, and they set up for their own worship what the Lord derisively called a "calf." They said, "These be your gods, O Israel." Yes, the chosen people of Jehovah ate and drank in honor of the image of a bullock which has horns and hoofs, and afterwards they rose up to play the lascivious games which attended such idolatrous worship. They thus made themselves naked to their shame, and the anger of the Lord was kindled against them. Truly the word preached had not profited them.

Moreover, they were always mistrustful. They could not endure a little thirst without fear that they would die of it. Whatever trial happened to them they were frightened and began to complain and were ready to rebel. The days of their provoking God were many. Their lusting after the flesh greatly grieved the Lord—when He had prepared them the best of diet, and "men did eat angels' food," they declared that the soul abhorred this light bread. When they had flesh they ate till they were sick of it. They were ever full of distrust and carnality. A stiff-necked generation they were; they went so far as to despise the Promised Land—they said, "It is a land that eats up the inhabitants thereof." They would gladly go back to Egypt rather than advance upon a scene of such great danger. They dared to speak as if death in Egypt had been preferable to the wilderness, for they would never be able to conquer the land. Ten of the spies whom they sent to spy out the land flattered their humor and defamed the country; they could not deny that it flowed with milk and honey, for the fruits were before them, and the clusters of Eshcol were convincing evidence of its fertility; but they said it ate up its inhabitants, implying that it was a deadly place to dwell in. Thus they set at nothing heaven's highest gift.

When the time came when they might have advanced against the foe, they were afraid to go up. When for this the Lord withdrew from them, then they resolved that they would go up and in consequence they were smitten by the Canaanites. They feared lest the giants would destroy them—they felt like grasshoppers in their sight. They dared not hope to win the country—they turned back in the day of battle. The end of it was they died in the wilderness. Ah me, the whole generation died in the wilderness—these very men that stood by the Red Sea and said, "I will sing unto the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously. You shall bring them in and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance." They sang, "Sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestine. All the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away." But, on the borders of the land, they trembled, turned back into the wilderness, and died! To them the inspiring gospel of the promised rest was altogether unprofitable.

O my hearers, fear and tremble lest it be the same with you! Let me go over this story once more with a personal application. Do you still cling to sin? Do you still love it? Would you be willing to go to heaven but are you unwilling to part with sin? Is the flavor of the onion of sinful pleasure still pleasant to your palate? Are you provoking the Lord to jealousy? Are you setting up idols? Are you loving self, and sin, and error, and the world? Do you distrust the Lord? Am I speaking to any gospel hearers who are still doubters, still refusing to believe that Jesus Christ can save? Are any still refusing to trust yourselves with Him who died upon the cross? It is sad that it should be so. Do you despise the goodly land? Do you say in your heart, "Heaven and heavenly things are too visionary for me; I have too much to do to earn my daily bread"? Are you sighing after flesh, after worldly wealth, and honor, and pleasure? Do you loathe the manna of holy joy, fellowship, bliss and life in Christ? Is it so? And do you fear today that you never can do what you should do, and that you can never conquer your evil propensities? Do you sit down supinely, judging your passions to be too strong to be subdued, your habits too firmly fixed to be changed? Are the giants too strong for you to slay them? Have you no trust in God and in His boundless grace? If so, O sirs, I fear your carcasses will fall in the wilderness, your

dying hour will come, and you will have no hope! The howling wilderness will be all around you in the hour of your departure out of this life, and you will pass from it to a state still worse, and find that you have missed glory, and honor, and immortality!

God grant it be not so. Yet I fear it will be so with many of you who abide in unbelief. A whole nation missed the rest of God—it will not be a wonder if you and I miss it, who are but one or two, unless we take earnest heed and are filled with fear—"lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of us should seem to come short of it."

III. So now, thirdly, I am going to put my finger upon THE FATAL CAUSE OF THIS DIREFUL CALAMITY. Why was it the gospel that they heard did not profit them?

Assuredly it was not the fault of the gospel which they heard! In itself it is calculated to profit all who receive it. It promised liberty and this should have made them gratefully obedient; it promised an inheritance and added to it a high and holy calling, and this should have aroused their loftiest aspiration! It promised every help to the getting of the promised blessings, and what could they have more? Concerning the gospel which I have preached to you, I can truly say that if you miss blessedness, it is not because you are straitened in the gospel, or are discouraged by the narrowness of the Lord's grace—

*"What more can He say,
Than to you He has said?"*

What larger provision, what greater promise can God give to guilty man than this—"He that believes in Him has everlasting life"? Pardon of sin, justification of your persons, salvation of your souls, and everlasting bliss—what more can be set before you? If this does not touch you, what will?

In their case it was not the fault of the preacher, for Moses spoke God's word with great meekness and gentleness. He set before them the truth of God with all fidelity. With all my imperfection, I hope I can say, also, that if you die in the wilderness I am clear of your blood, for I have warned you to escape, and I have bid you seek, first, the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Neither was it the fault of a lack of confirming signs from God. No default of divine working hindered Israel's faith. God worked with His gospel in those days very mightily. The daily manna and the water leaping from the rock, with other signs and wonders, went to prove the word of the Lord. If men do not believe the gospel of Christ, it is not because it does not work wonders. You have seen others converted; you have seen others die in perfect peace! You have seen what the Lord can do for His believing people, and if you believe not, you will die in your sins. I have heard much of "honest doubt." But I honestly believe that much of doubt is the most dishonest thing out of perdition; take heed that you are not hardened by the deceitfulness of this sin. It will ruin you if you indulge in it. "Believe and live," is the gospel. "Doubt and die," is the alternative. Neither was it for lack of the Holy Spirit that these people made the gospel a failure to them, for we read that the Holy Spirit spoke to them, and they rebelled and vexed the Holy Spirit. It was the Holy Spirit who spoke to them and said, "Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." That same Holy Spirit is still with the gospel! Oftentimes He stirs your hearts, and moves you even to tears—He makes deep impressions, and causes you to long after better things. Quench not the Spirit! Grieve not the Spirit of God! If He leaves you, you are lost forever. And He may do so. God grant this may not be the case!

Well, then, what was the cause? We put our finger on it at once—"Not being mixed with *faith* in them that heard it." Where there is no faith in the gospel, no good consequence can possibly come of it. If it were preached to you by angels—yes, if one arose from the dead and proclaimed it to you—if you believed it not, what could be the beneficial effect of hearing it? Men, why do you hear it, if you do not mean to believe it? If you will be damned, why do you throng this place to hear about salvation? If you are resolved that you will not have the promise of God, why come and listen to His servant who has nothing else to tell you? Are we set up to be as marionettes, or dancing dolls, for you to stare at? God forbid that we should ever accept the calling of actors in a play. If we do not win your hearts for Christ, and so save you, we have labored in vain and spent our strength for nothing!

See the effect of absence of faith and lament it. Where there is no faith, men remain slaves to the present. If they did not believe in the milk and honey of Canaan, you see why they hankered for the

cucumbers of Egypt. An onion is nothing comparable to an estate beyond Jordan. Yet as they think they cannot get the estate, they pine for the onions! When men do not believe in eternal life, they naturally enough cry, "Give me bread and cheese; let me have a fortune here." They keep their nose to the grindstone, always thinking about this passing life, because they do not heartily believe in heaven and its glories. They are as "dumb driven cattle" that see not into another state—this life seems real to them but the next life they suspect to be a dream. As long as there is no faith, this world is all, and the world to come is nothing at all. If a man hears and has no faith, he learns nothing. What would be the use of your listening to lectures upon science if you disbelieved what the professor set forth? You are no pupil, you are a critic, and you cannot learn. Many professors have no faith, and consequently whoever may teach them, they will never come to knowledge of the truth of God. Israel never saw through the almost transparent veil of the types because they did not believe; if they had believed, they would have discovered under every symbol a world of wondrous meaning, instructing them in the things of God. Lack of faith means lack of eye and lack of perception.

The truth of God's word did not affect the hearts of Israel, as it does not affect any man's heart till he has believed it. If there is a goodly heritage, and I believe it, then I long for it, and then I strive for it. But if it is to me as an idle tale, it does not affect me one whit. If there is liberty for the captive, I desire it and I cry to God to give it to me. But if I do not believe that escape is possible, I shall sit down in despair. If I believe the gospel, it affects my life, it changes my character—it takes me down from false hope, and it lifts me up to a surer confidence! Only that which is believed can operate upon our spiritual nature. As light is of no use if we cannot see, so is the gospel of no service if we have no eye of faith. The gospel plays on a man like some mighty minstrel upon his harp; it touches every string of our soul. The Master sometimes stays His hand to tune each string, that it may yield the right note, and this once done, what angel voices sing amid those strings! A man's soul touched by the finger of the gospel loves the music of God!

If the gospel is not believed, those fingers touch mute strings, and no response is heard. A man that has no faith in what he hears does not appropriate it. One cries, "There is gold! Let me go and get it." Unbelief restrains him, as it whispers, "There is no gold, or it is beyond reach." He does not go to get it, for he does not believe. A hungry man passes by where there is entertainment for needy travelers. Believing that there is food for his hunger, he tarries at the door, but if unbelief mutters, "There is a bare table within, you might as soon break your neck as break your fast in that place," then the traveler hurries on. Unbelief palsies the hand and it appropriates nothing. That which is not appropriated can be of no use to you. Look at your food. How is it that it builds up your body? Because you take it into the mouth and it descends into the stomach, and there it is mixed with certain fluids and is digested, and ultimately is taken up into the system, and becomes a life-sustaining force. Being properly mixed, it is taken up and assimilated. And so it is with the heavenly truth of God—if it is taken into the heart and then mixed with *faith*, it is digested and becomes food to every part of the spiritual nature. Without faith the gospel passes through the soul undigested and rather feeds disease than promotes life. O my hearers, what a dreadful lack is the lack of faith!

Lastly, these people could not enter in because they had no faith. They could go to the border of the land but they must die even there. They could send their spies into the country, but they could not see the fertile valleys themselves. Without faith they could not enter Canaan. Shall it be so with us, that, for lack of faith, we shall hear the gospel, know something about its power, and yet miss its glories and never enter into possession of the life eternal which it reveals? Here is the point—"They could not enter in because of unbelief."

With two practical points I will conclude. One is this—see the great value of *hearing* the gospel. Do hear it as often as you can. Do not get into the sluggish habit of those who are content with one spiritual meal for the whole week. Once on the Sabbath is enough for many nowadays. Hear as often as you can. On the weeknights come out to hear the word. I may not long be able to preach it, nor you to hear it. Hear it often, for one of these days it may be blessed to your soul, if it has not been so as yet. What a mercy to have your hearing! Dear friends who used to hear me preach, and are now very old, come to

me in the vestry with sad faces, and say, "I cannot even hear you now." When the eyesight also begins to fail, as it does in some cases, and thus they are deprived of reading as well as of hearing, it is a double trial. You will miss the gospel if ever it comes to that with you, as it may in old age. Be sure that you hear and read while you can, and thus store up God's word in your mind.

Also, pray our Lord to raise up more preachers of the gospel—they are few enough. "Pray you the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth laborers into His harvest." Pray much for those who preach the gospel faithfully, that they may be kept true to the Bible and honest to souls. The gospel is getting more and more adulterated. One of these days you will need a microscope to find a grain of evangelical doctrine in a dozen sermons! Indeed, the small proportion of gospel to a sea of words is often like one homeopathic globule in the Atlantic Ocean, there is so little of it. God grant that we may have the gospel preserved to us, and be enabled to hear it!

But still, the great necessity is *faith*. Instead of speaking upon that subject, let me beg you to try and do a little mixing at once. Don't mix philosophy with the gospel—by the help of God's Spirit mix *faith* with it. Before us is the glorious Word made flesh in the eternal Son of God in our nature! He lives for men. He dies to make atonement for sin. Even He cannot save you unless you now mix faith with all those truths about Him which the Scriptures teach you. Now mix faith with what you know concerning the Savior, and say, "Lord, I believe that You are the Son of God; I believe that You did live a perfect life, which is our righteousness; I believe that You did die a painful death which brings us pardon; I believe that You always live to intercede; and I trust my soul in Your hands." That is mixing faith with the gospel, and you will in this fashion richly profit by the gospel; you will go your way a saved man!

There is proclaimed in the gospel the pardon of sin. The Lord blots out the sins of His believing people like a cloud. Mix faith with that doctrine, and say, "Lord, I believe that You can put away all my sins through Jesus Christ; You can wash away my crimson stains and scarlet spots, and make me whiter than snow; Lord, I trust You to do this; I rely upon You for the forgiveness of my transgressions!" By this act of faith you will be profited by the promise and pardon, for you are pardoned the moment you believe in Him who is exalted on high to give repentance and remission of sins!

Try what you can do with eternal life itself. Say, "Lord, I believe that there is a spiritual life which You do breathe into believers; I believe that this grows from divine grace to glory; You give to believers eternal life even here—death cannot kill it, and so they live on and on and on, throughout eternity, forever blessed in Christ! Lord, I believe in the new creation, and I appropriate it. I trust in Jesus for it. This heritage is mine! By faith I take it to myself." God will never take away what you can grasp by faith! Accept it and the acceptance makes it yours—for the Lord Himself made it yours long ago in His eternal purpose, and therefore He has given you faith as a token that He ordained heaven and perfection to be yours. Mix faith with every promise. Henceforth continue to practice the holy art of mixing faith with the revelations of Scripture. Compound them as the dispensers do! Here is a choice drug but it needs mixing with its proper affinity. The promise must be mixed with faith if it is to be life-giving to the soul. Mix it, then, with faith and be profited immediately and eternally! Be united to the truth of God and it will save you! Let it come into union with you and you will never perish! The Lord help you to be joined unto His truth by faith, for Christ's sake! Amen.

Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software.

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